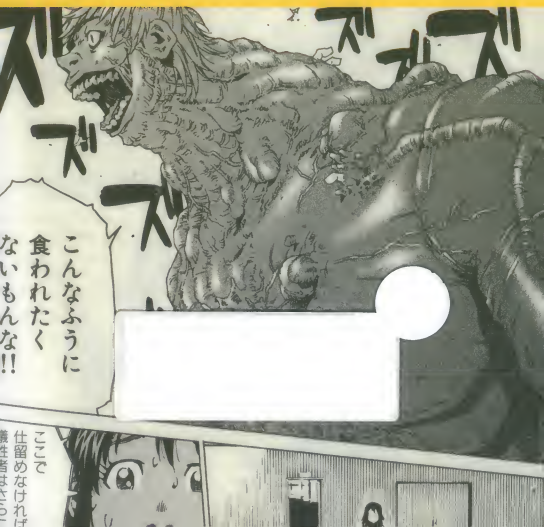


7 Billion Needles

Nobuaki Tadano

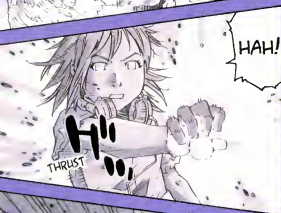
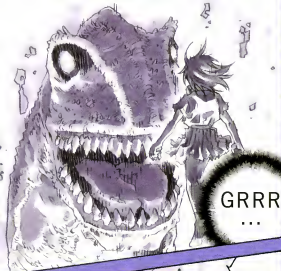
Volume 2

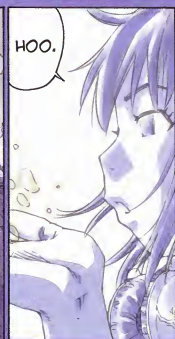
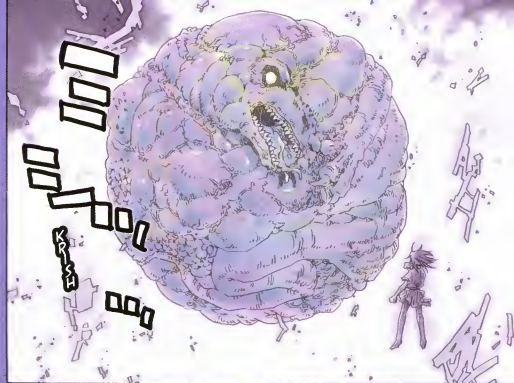
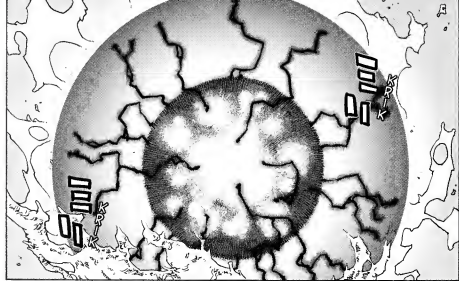


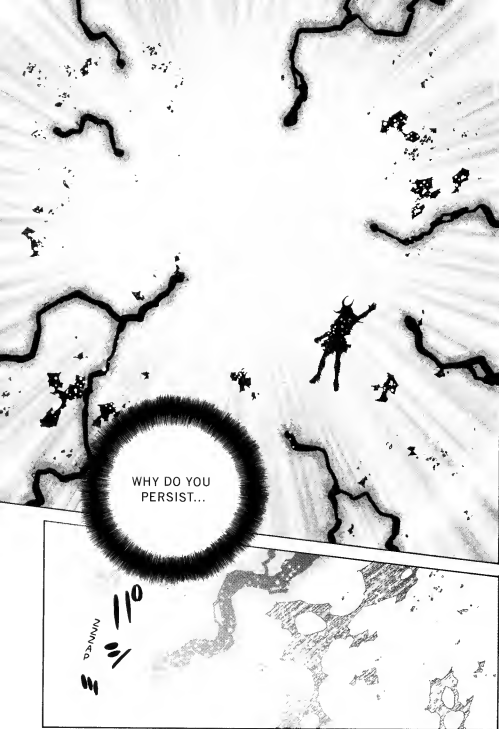
7 BILLION NEEDLES

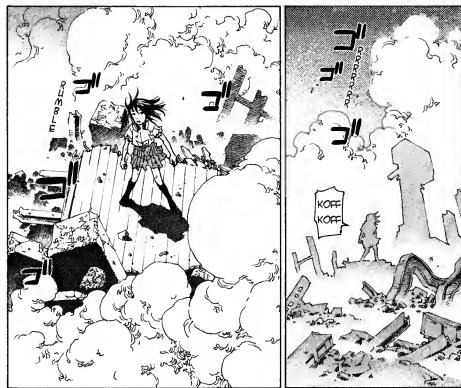
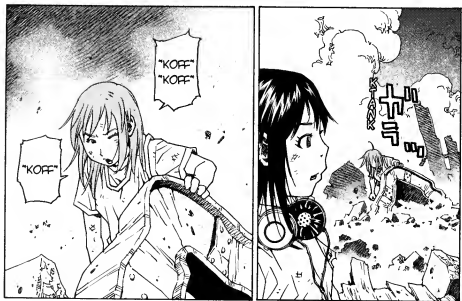
NOBUAKI TADANO

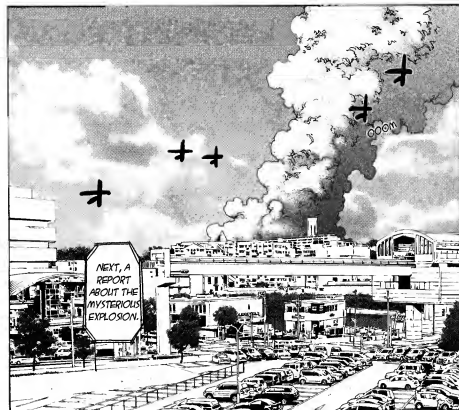
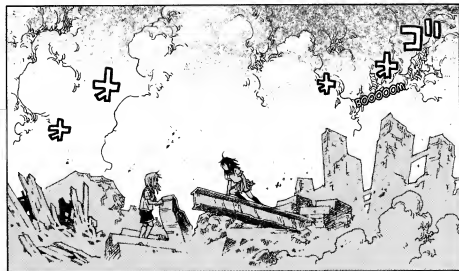
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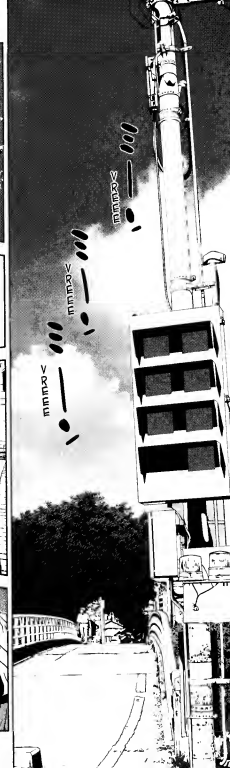
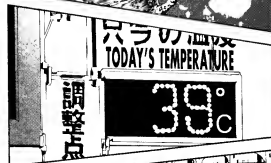
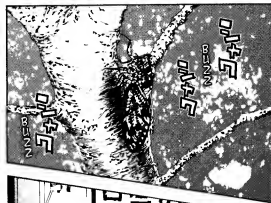
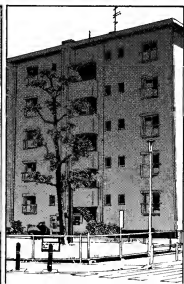
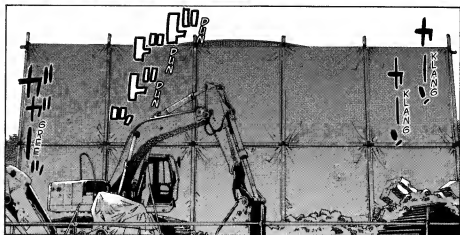
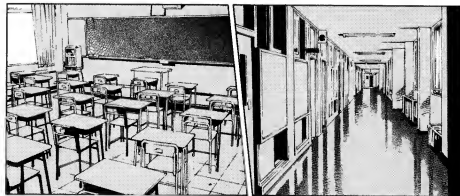


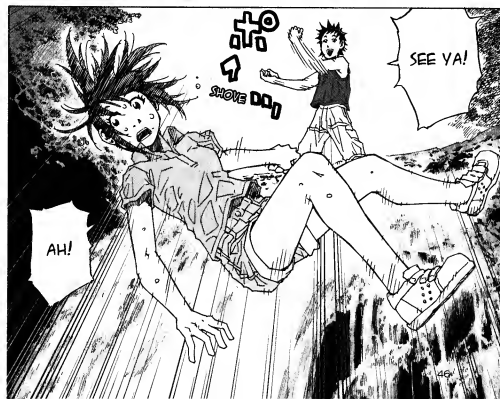
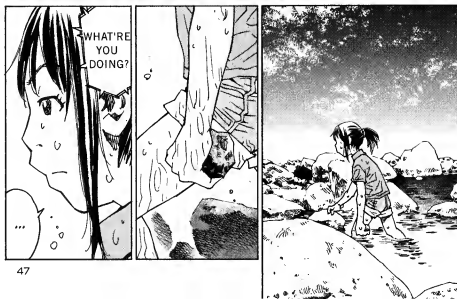


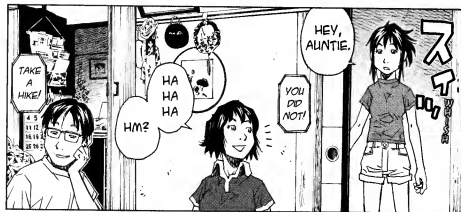
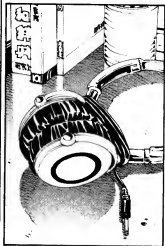


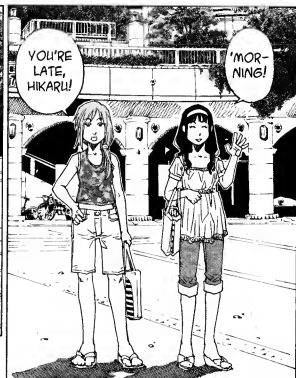


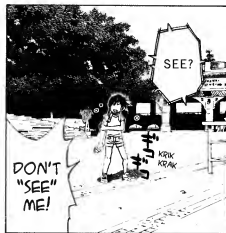












DON'T
"SEE"
ME!

ACK
!!



UH,
OKAY!

THE
FERRY'S
ABOUT
TO
LEAVE!



YEAH,
RIGHT.



IT
MUST
BE
REASSUR-
ING
TO
HAVE
THEM
WITH
YOU.

YOU
HAVE
SOME
FEARS
ABOUT
THE
PLACE
YOU'RE
HEADING.



THAT
I
SHOULD
THANK
MY
AUNT
FOR
THIS?

YOU
WERE
SAY-
ING

AH,
YES.



WHO'RE
YOU
TALKING
TO?

HIKARU
?

HIH?
UH...



HMM, NOT
SURE WHY.
BUT I THINK
YOU SHOULD
THANK
AUNT MAKI
FOR THIS.



LET'S
SEE
WHEN
THE
FERRY'S
GONNA
LEAVE.

N-
NAO!

HIH?
OH,
OK.



AREN'T
WE
THROUGH
?

HEH,
WHY
ARE
YOU
STILL
HERE?



WHAT?!

YOUR
BODY
IS
NOT
COMPLETELY
RECOVERED.



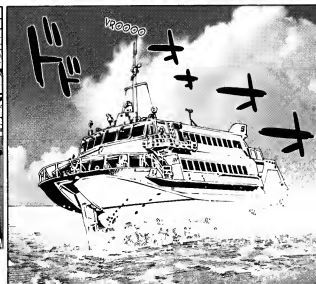
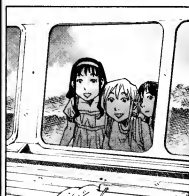
ISN'T
HIKARU
ACTING
ODD?

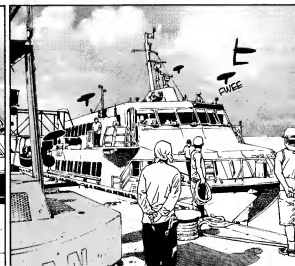
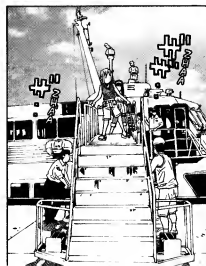
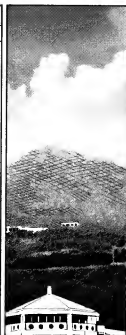
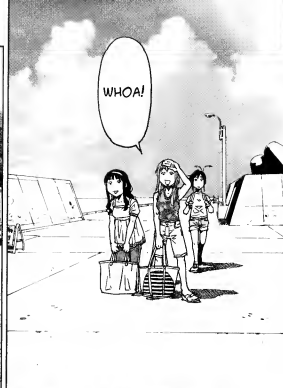
YA
THINK
?

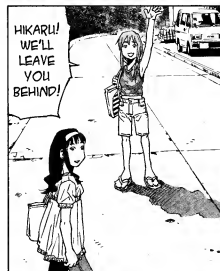
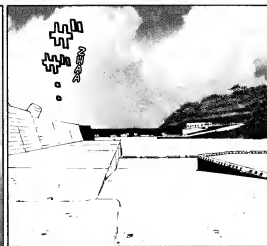
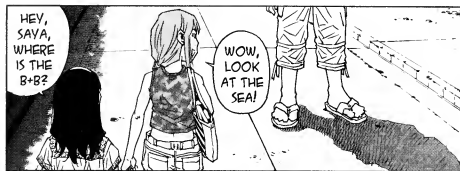


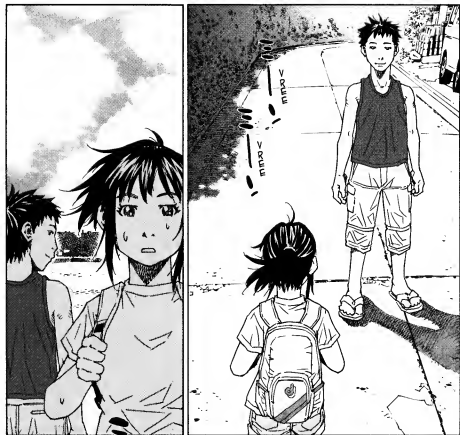
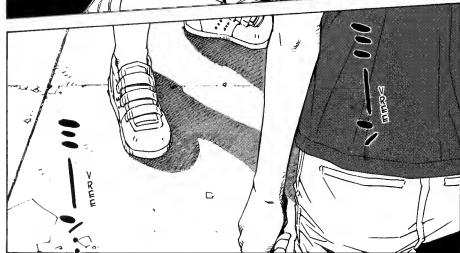
MY
MISSION
IS
OVER.
HOW-
EVER...

OF
COURSE,











8. Childhood Friend





MASAYA?!

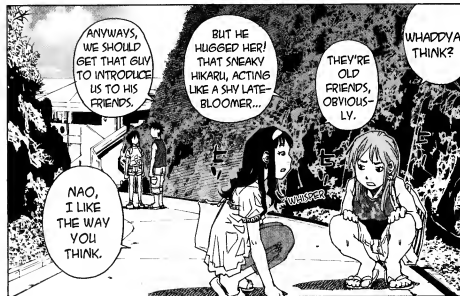


YOU
GOT MY
POST-
CARDS
?



DIDJA
HAVE TO
MAKE A
FIST?

YES.



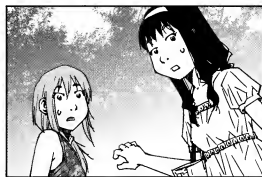
ANYWAYS,
WE SHOULD
GET THAT GUY
TO INTRODUCE
US TO HIS
FRIENDS.

BUT HE
HUGGED HER!
THAT SNEAKY
HIKARU, ACTING
LIKE A SHY LATE-
BLOOMER...

THEY'RE
OLD
FRIENDS,
OBVIOUS-
LY.

WHADDYA
THINK?

NAO,
I LIKE
THE WAY
YOU THINK.



HIKARU.

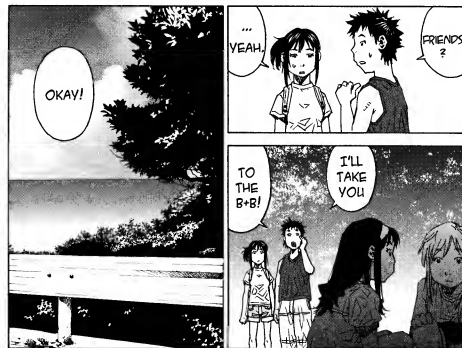
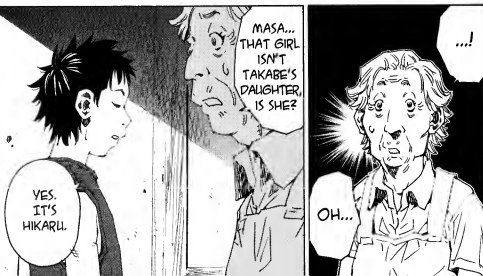
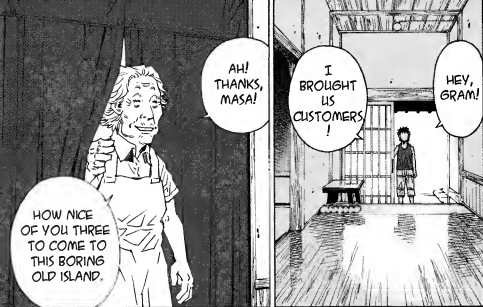


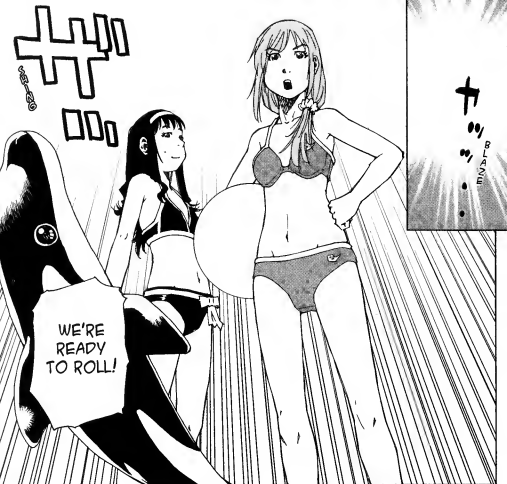
IT'S BEEN
A WHILE,
BUT
YOU SURE
HAVEN'T
CHANGED.

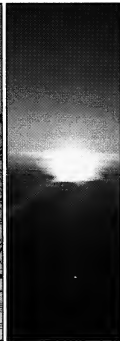
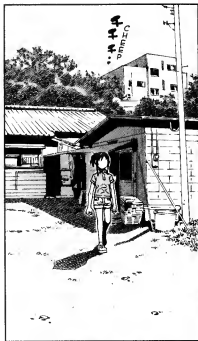
OUCH
...

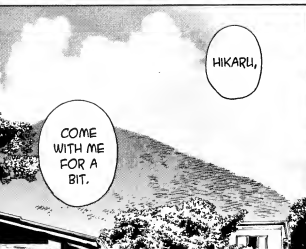


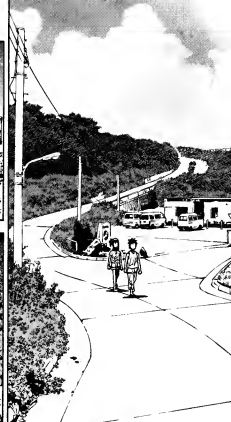
OW!!

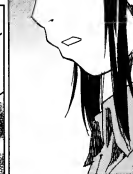
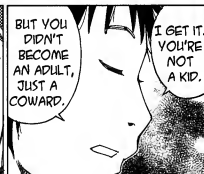


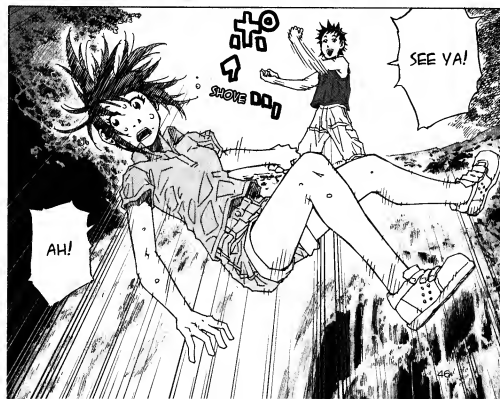
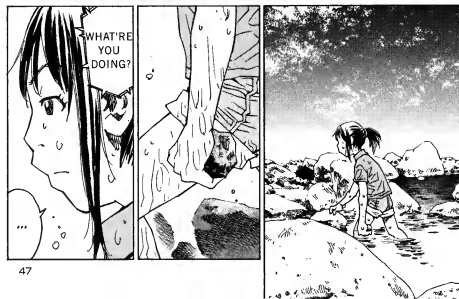


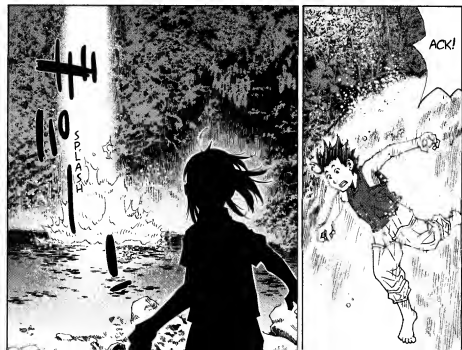
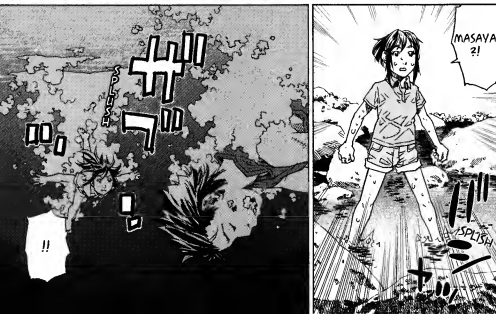
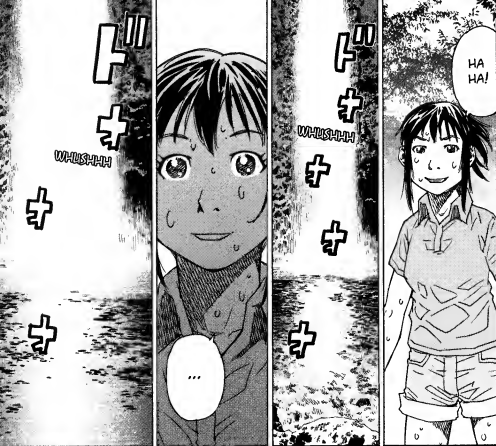




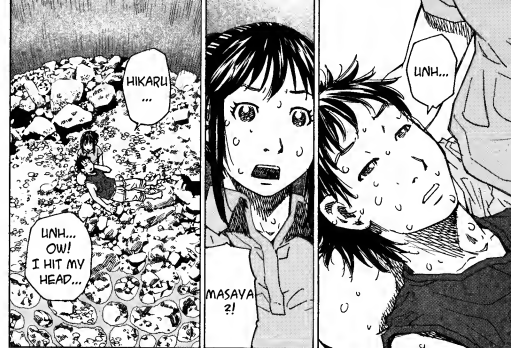


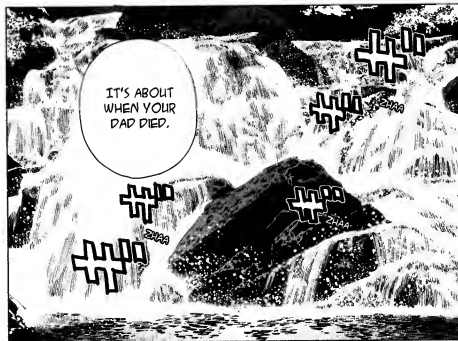


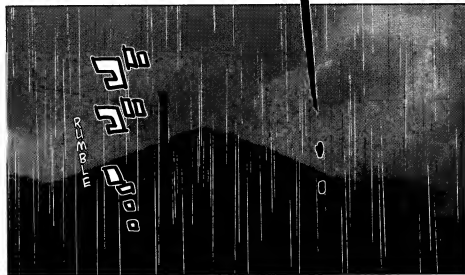


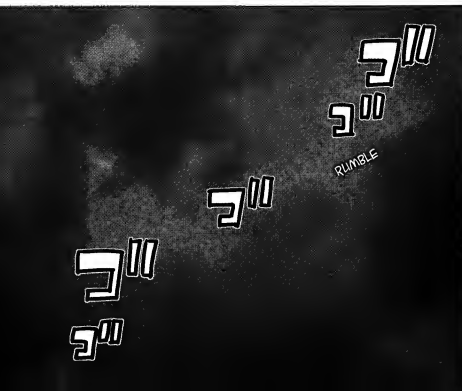


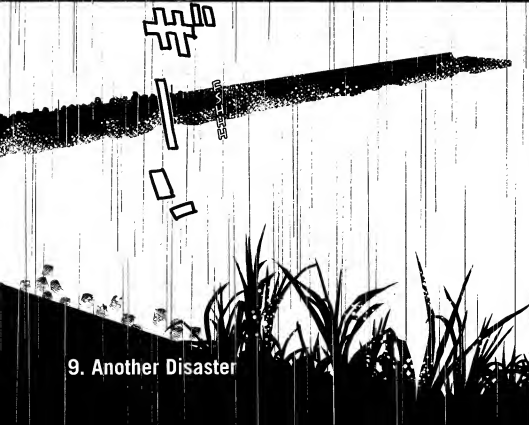




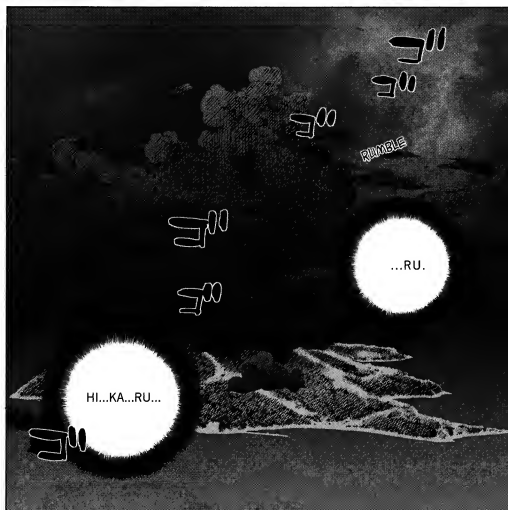


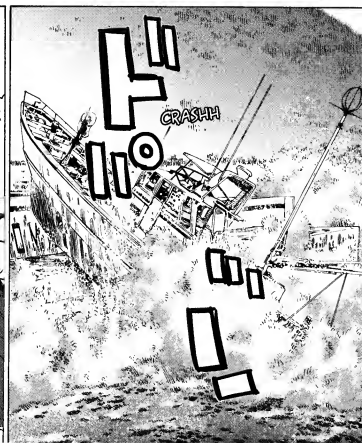
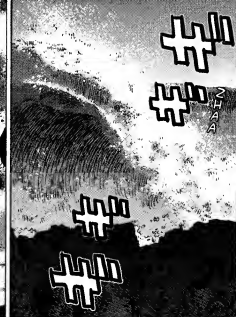
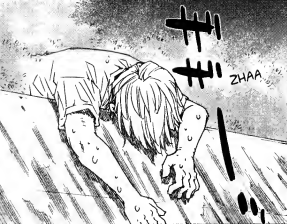






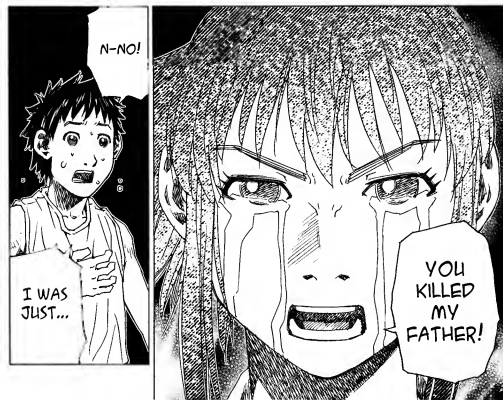
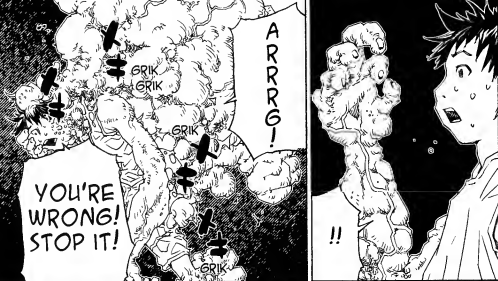
9. Another Disaster













DEJA VU.
I'VE FELT
THIS
BEFORE
...



HIKARU
...?



THERE'S
NO
LIGHT.



BUT...
THIS BODY
KNOWS
WHERE
SHE IS.

I
DON'T
KNOW.



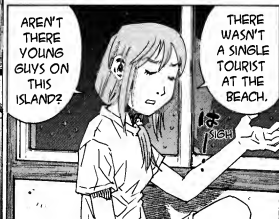
WHY?

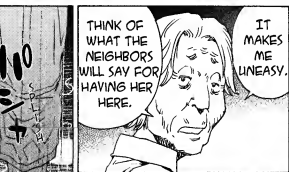
I'M
SEARCHING
FOR
HIKARU.

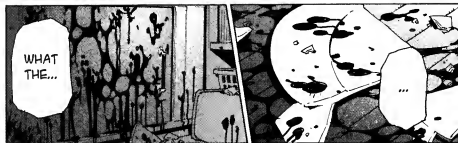


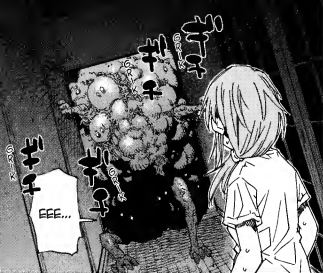
THE BRIGHT
LIGHT THAT
PIERCES
THROUGH
CRYSTAL IS
BOTH WAVE
AND
PARTICLE
...

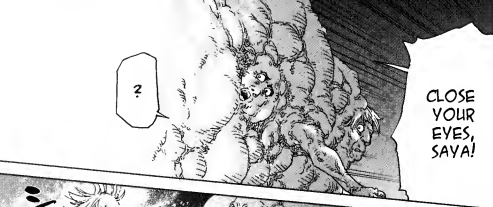
TRANS-
PARENT
CRYSTALS
...



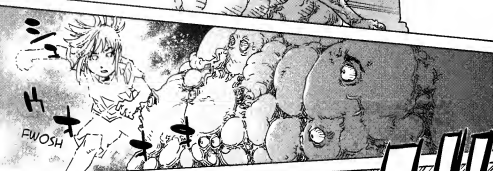








CLOSE
YOUR
EYES,
SAYA!



UHH...

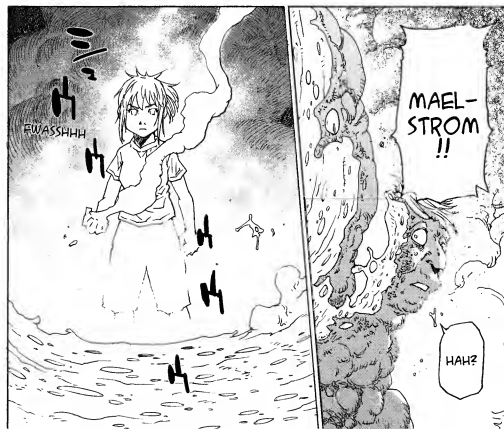
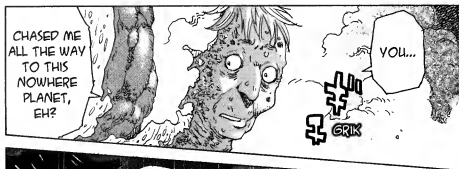
UHH...

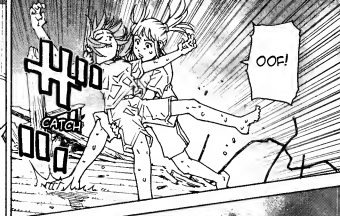


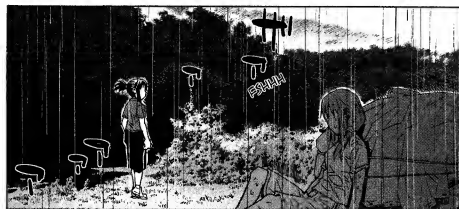
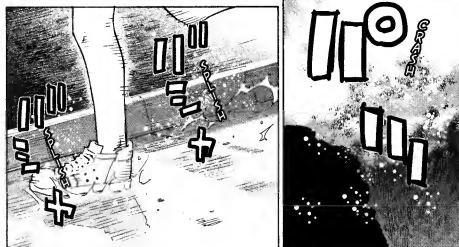
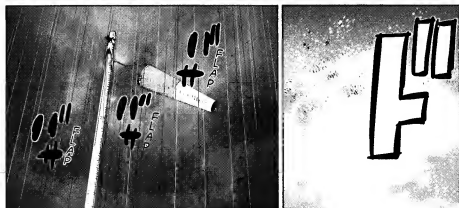
GRIK

GASP





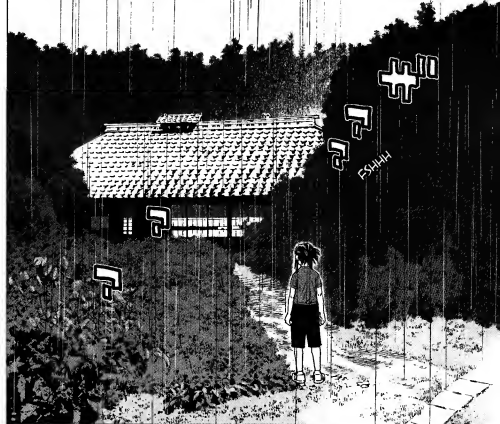


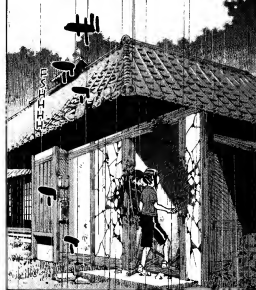
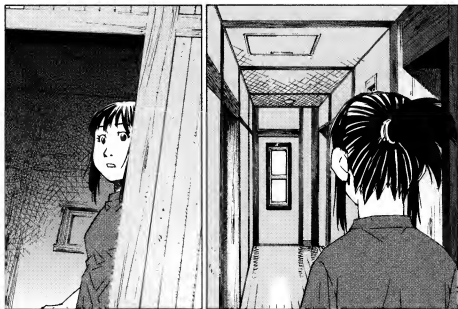


10. Repetition

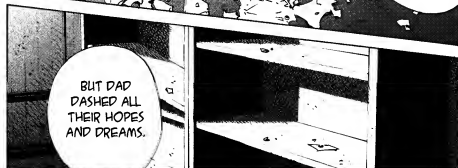


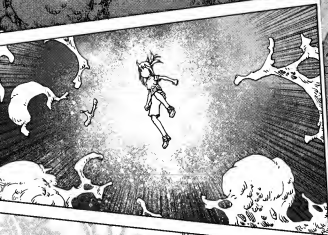


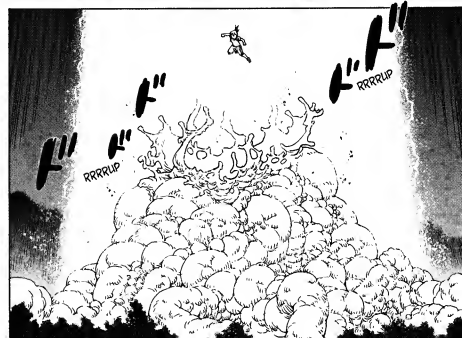




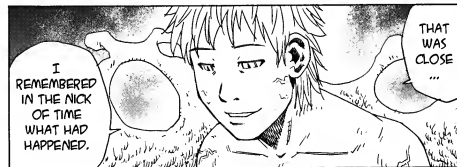


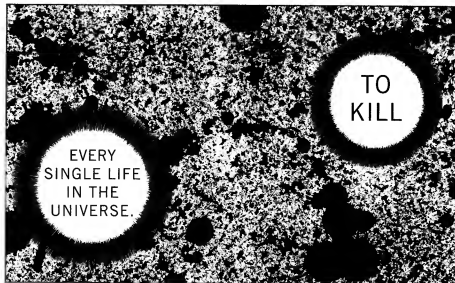
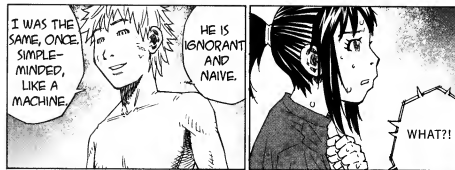


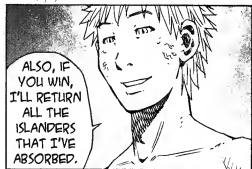


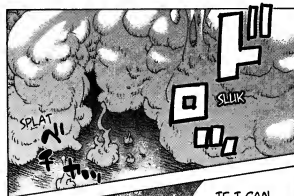






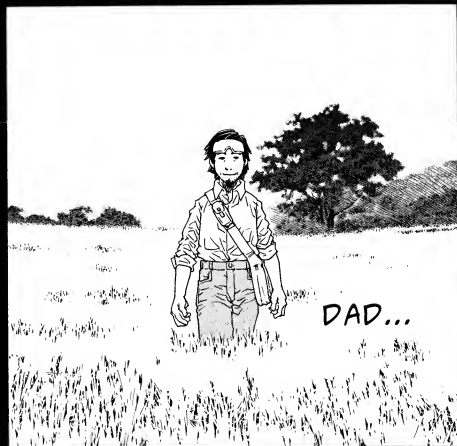
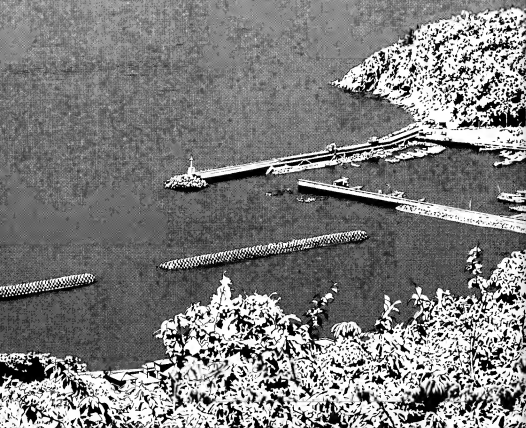


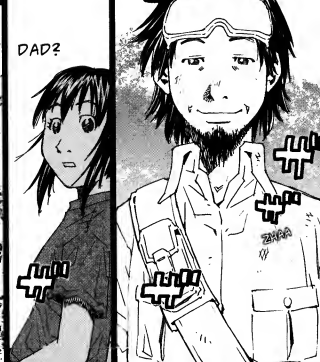






11. Alone





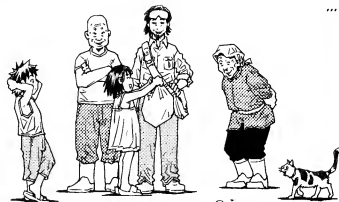


HOW HAD I
FORGOTTEN
THAT, TOO,
ALL THIS TIME?

ALL THE
ISLANDERS
BELIEVED IN
DAD'S DREAM.

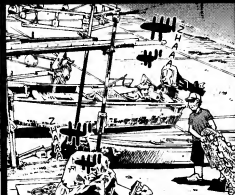
BUT I
NEVER
FELT
LONELY.

AFTER
MOM DIED,
IT WAS JUST
ME AND DAD
...



BUT IF I
FREEZE 'EM
I CAN
HAVE 'EM
WHENEVER.

PROCESS
AND MIX IN
THE LITTLE
FISH THAT
DON'T
SELL



ACK!
IT'S
COLD,
HIKARU!

HEY,
MASAYA
!

HA
HA!



YEAH,
I HEARD
!

THE MAYOR
IS USING HIS
INFLUENCE
TO ALLOW
PROSPECT
DIGGING.



HELLO!

HELLO,
DOC!



HURRY UP
AND FIND THAT
BLACK ORE
SO WE CAN
LIVE IN
COMFORT!

IT'S
FINE, IT'S
FINE!

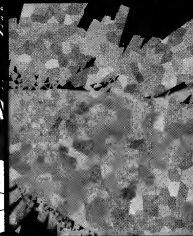
THANK
YOU FOR
ALL
THIS FISH.

WAS I
REALLY
SO
HAPPY
?

THAT'S
ME
WHEN
I WAS
LITTLE.





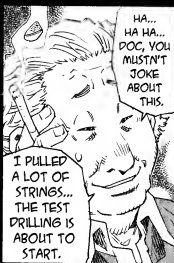




HOW DARE YOU!!



I DON'T THINK ANY WILL BE FOUND.



HA... HA HA... DOC, YOU MUSTN'T JOKE ABOUT THIS.

I PULLED A LOT OF STRINGS... THE TEST DRILLING IS ABOUT TO START.



DOC.

WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?



I'M VERY SORRY.



YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH WE'VE GIVEN YOU?

YOU DAZZLED US WITH DREAMS ...



MR. MAYOR, AFTER VARIOUS TESTS...

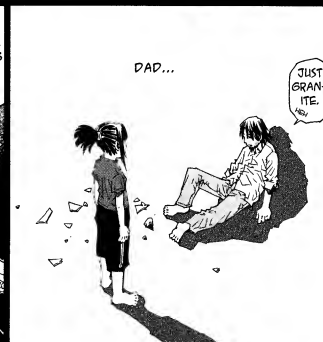
I HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO FIND A BLACK ORE BED ON THIS ISLAND.



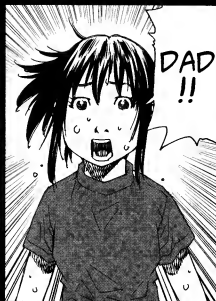


THE
ISLANDERS
STARTED
HARASSING US
AFTER THAT
DAY.

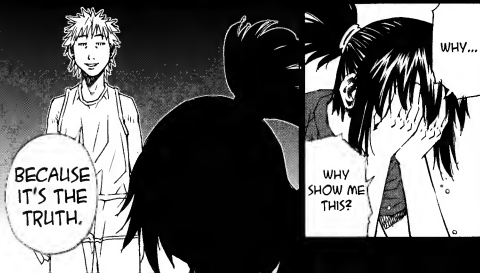


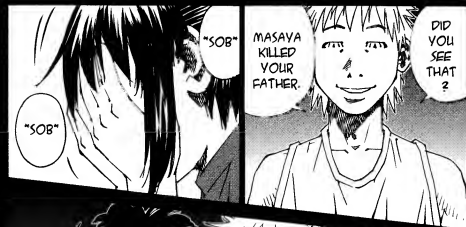












IF YOU
PUT THESE ON,
YOU WON'T
HEAR A THING.

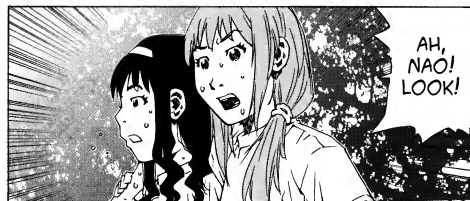
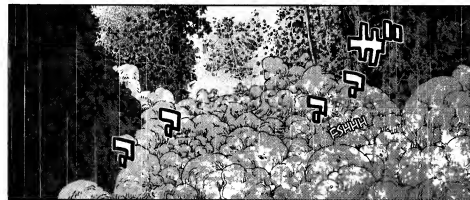
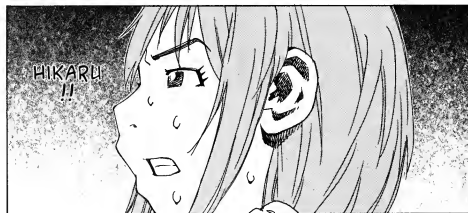


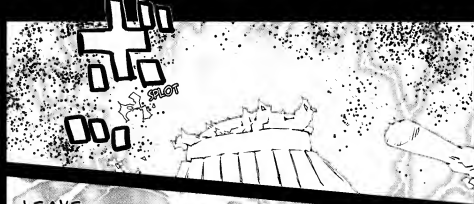
NOT A
THING.



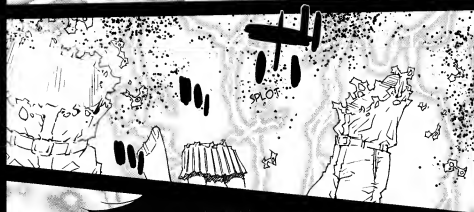
HERE,
TAKE
THESE.







LEAVE
ME
ALONE...

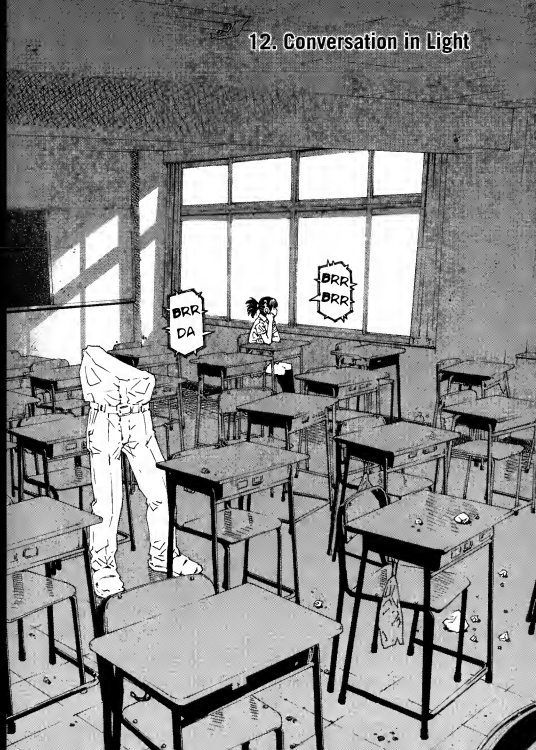


ALONE!

LEAVE
ME



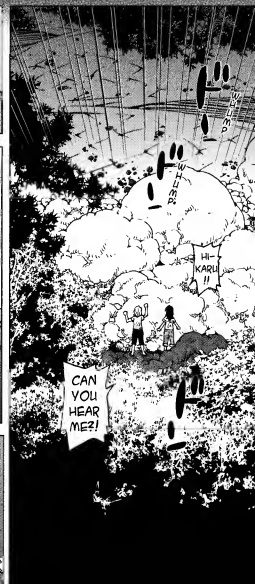
LEAVE
ME
ALONE.

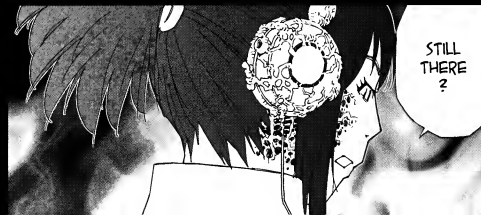
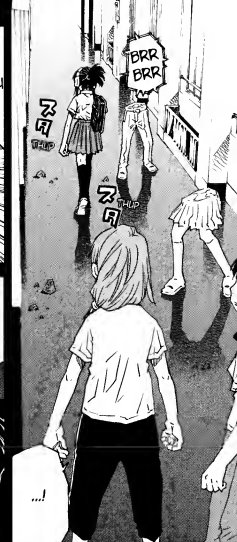


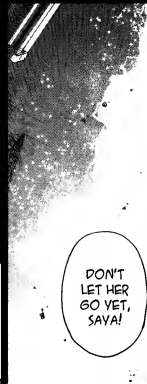
12. Conversation in Light













YOU'RE
NOT
ALONE.



HIKARU
...



S-
STAY
AWAY!

I SAID
LEAVE
ME
ALONE!



I WAS
ACTUALLY
HOPING
TO END IT
MYSELF.
CRUSHED WITH
DESPAIR...

RIGHT
BEFORE
I DIED,



BUT I
COULDN'T
DO IT.



HIKARU!



"SOB"

"SOB"



HIKARU,
YOU WILL
BE ALONE
FOREVER!!

LIES!!

??!

LET'S GO,
HIKARU.
THERE'S
NOTHING
TO FEAR.

I AM
HERE,
TOO.

HIKARU.

THAT'S
WHY
YOU'RE
NOT
ALONE,

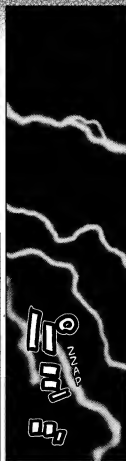
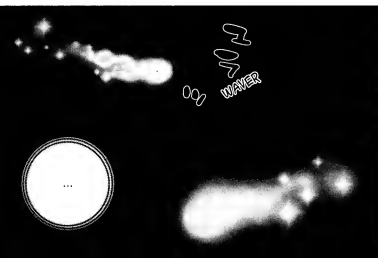
BUT YOU'RE
GONE!
YOU LEFT ME
BEHIND!

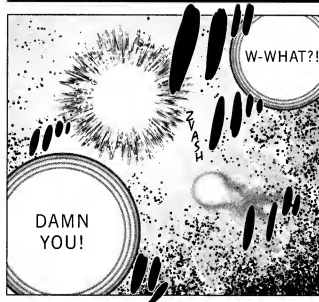
BECAUSE
I HAD
YOU.

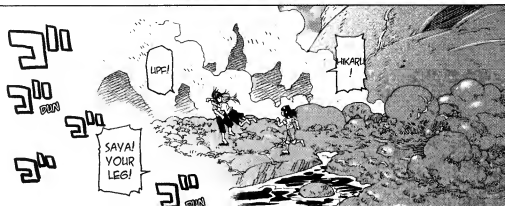
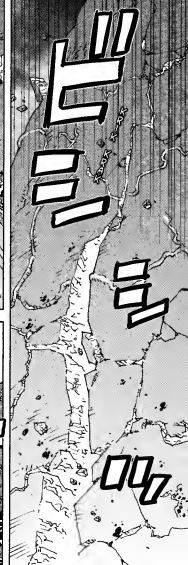
BECAUSE
OF YOU,
MY DAUGHTER,
I WANTED
TO TRY LIVING
ONCE MORE.

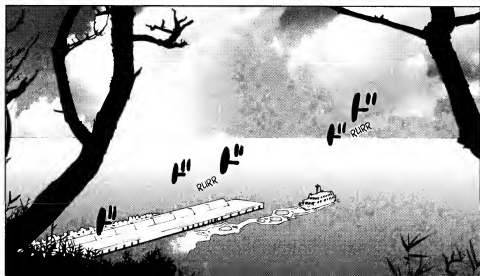
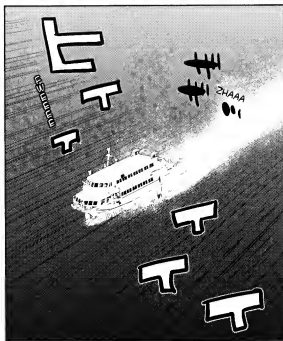
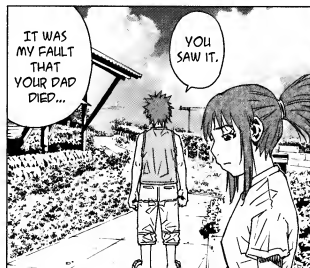
YOU EVEN
HAVE A
FAMILY AND
HOME
WAITING
FOR YOU.

INSTEAD
YOU HAVE
FRIENDS
NOW.











SO WE
MEET
AGAIN,
HIKARU.

SORRY.
IT'S
MAEL-
STROM.



THERE'S
SOMEONE
I HAVE TO
INTRODUCE
TO YOU.

HUH?
WHAT'RE
YOU
TALKING
ABOUT?



WHAT
MY DAD
SAID...

YES?

HEY,
HORIZON.



I WANTED TO
TRY LIVING
ONCE MORE.

BECAUSE
OF YOU



NO...
NO...

AFTER
SOME
THOUGHT,

THIS
HANDLING
OF THE
MATTER
SEEMED
MOST
ACTUAL.



IT WAS ALL
A DREAM!
I'LL WAKE
UP FROM
THE SCHOOL
TRIP...

N-N-NO!
I MUST BE
HEARING
THINGS...
DREAMING!

UNABLE
TO GRASP
THE
SITUATION,
HER BRAIN
HAS
DISCARDED
LOGIC.

UH,
HORIZON,
WHAT DO YOU
CALL THE STATE
SHE'S
EXPRESSING
?



...I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT
YOU
MEAN.

HEH...

WHAT-
EVER.



WAS
THAT
YOU?



WHY
?

BY THE WAY,
I SHOULD
APOLOGIZE
FIRST.

7 BILLION NEEDLES

End of Volume 2





anony-
mous